

**DETROIT INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL PROJECT**  
**Draft Public Meeting Notes**  
**April 1, 2004**  
**Southwest Detroit/East Dearborn Area – Livernois-Junction Yard**  
**LA-SED Gymnasium**  
**715 West Vernor**

**Purpose:** To brief the public, during both public forum and presentation-question/answer sessions, on the progress made on the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project in the areas of: terminal layout/size; preliminary traffic analysis results; social/cultural effects evaluation process; economic impacts; and, air quality.

**Attendance:** See attachment.

**Discussion:**

Following the open forum session (which lasted from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.), Bob Parsons of MDOT welcomed everyone to the meeting. He indicated that the presentation-question/answer session would last from 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. He noted that the presentation would take about 45 minutes with the remaining time left for the public to ask its questions/make comments.

Bob Parsons noted that both Arabic and Spanish translators were available. Each translator asked those in attendance if they needed special assistance. No assistance was requested.

Bob Parsons indicated that following the presentation, those who wished to speak should complete a form and submit it to him so he could call each person in the order in which forms were received.

Bob Parsons introduced Mohammed Alghurabi, MDOT's project manager on the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project. He also introduced Joe Corradino, the consultant project manager on the DIFT Project. Joe Corradino made a presentation using slides of many of the graphics that were posted on the walls in the meeting room. He covered the following issues:

- 1) What is intermodal;
- 2) The purpose and goal of the DIFT Project;
- 3) The alternatives being considered;
- 4) The location/size of each terminal;
- 5) The social/cultural data available and a request for input from any member of the audience;
- 6) The preliminary traffic analysis results;

- 7) The preliminary air quality analysis results;
- 8) The preliminary economic impact analysis results;
- 9) A description of Alternative 4: The Composite Option; and,
- 10) The updated project schedule accounting for the introduction of Alternative 4.

### **Questions and Comments**

Following the presentation, Bob Parsons reminded those in attendance that a card should be completed if they wished to speak. Speakers were then called to ask questions/make comments.

*Q: Why is health assessment not being done?*

R: The federal sponsor of the DIFT Project, the Federal Highway Administration, has indicated that a health risk assessment is not appropriate because neither the science nor the modeling is available to perform such an assessment with accuracy.

*Q: Why is the CBRA alternative not being studied?*

R: Alternative 2: Improve/Expand Existing Terminals, is a close representation for the CBRA alternative. The CBRA alternative was analyzed in the Feasibility Study and it is not workable.

*Q: What is the relationship of the terminal gate at Dix/Waterman/Vernor and the various alternatives?*

R: Several options for locating the gate(s) to the Livernois-Junction Yard for Alternative 2 are shown on the graphics. These include a gate at the Dix/Waterman/Vernor area; a western gate to provide access off of Wyoming via Mercier/Eagle; and, a trench/underpass of the railroad tracks extending from Livernois Avenue. On Alternative 3 (Consolidate), gates at the east and west parts of the terminal are the only ones proposed. There is no proposed gate at the Dix/Waterman/Vernor intersection with Alternative 3.

*Q: Are there estimates for jobs by year?*

R: The graphics on display show the proposed job development by year by alternative.

*Q: If you are not allowed to do a health study, what will the state do to aid communities address PM<sub>2.5</sub> that exceeds standards?*

R: As the DIFT project moves forward, mitigation measures will be considered, such as requiring cleaner fuels to be used by on-site/off-road equipment. Special equipment to control idling of railroad and other onsite equipment may also be considered to control diesel emissions such as PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

*C: MDOT must take into account the demographics of the area and the skills of those in the area when considering job development. Training programs must be made available.*

R: With a project such as the DIFT, training money is often made available and mechanisms can be created to allocate a specific percentage of the jobs generated during construction of the project, and afterwards, for the local community.

*C: The speaker lives on Livernois Avenue and indicates an entrance to the terminal is directly across from his house. An increase of intermodal terminal traffic will cause an increase in noise.*

R: Livernois Avenue is a wide street that can accommodate heavy traffic. It is a preferred access route for the Livernois-Junction Yard today and in the future. Use of Livernois Avenue helps keep trucks from using the small, neighborhood streets.

*Q: Can something be done to restrict trucks from parking on local roads?*

R: Something can be done at the local level. It is known that enforcement does exist on this and other issues.

*Q: If Central is separated from Kronk by a new viaduct, who will maintain it, the city or the railroads?*

R: That answer is not now known but will have to be worked out in a Memorandum of Understanding before the Final Environmental Impact Statement is produced.

*Q: Is there a truck route connecting Springwells at I-75 to the Livernois-Junction Yard?*

R: The truck-only road external to the terminal has been dropped because the traffic does not justify the expense.

*C: The DIFT will be affecting lives, jobs and the neighborhood. The Southwest Detroit area is getting better and now. But, with expansion of the Livernois-Junction Yard, whatever is lost will not be recovered. It will take a lot to sell this project.*

*C: The expansion of the Livernois-Junction Yard will take away jobs.*

R: Jobs will be created, both for the construction of the expanded Livernois-Junction Yard and on a permanent basis as a result of improved intermodal activity. More jobs will be created than those that may be relocated (not lost) because of terminal expansion.

*Q: What will happen when all these trucks are in the area of West Vernor?*

R: Most of the options for truck access to the Livernois-Junction Yard avoid the West Vernor area. Previous suggestions for using a gate at the Dix/Waterman area in the DIFT Feasibility Study were associated with physical improvements to that intersection.

*Q: What will happen at the DIFT public hearing in terms of a recommendation?*

R: There will be no alternatives recommended at the public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement expected to be held in October/November 2004. The hearing will display facts and provide information on all the alternatives prior to a recommendation being made. A recommendation on the DIFT Project is likely to be one year away.

*Q: Why don't the traffic maps show more local streets? What about traffic around the Ambassador Bridge along Clark Street or West Grand Boulevard?*

R: The major streets that are in the traffic analysis are shown on the graphics in the room; however, not every street is shown. The analysis area does not extend to the Ambassador Bridge influence zone. However, there is a separate study of that area for which traffic data are available.

*Q: Explain how trucks of the future will not be able to get in the terminal by using Central Avenue.*

R: No gate to the terminal at Livernois-Junction Yard is to be provided at Central Avenue or on the north side of the terminal.

*Q: The original plan was to build a bridge on Central Avenue over the railroad tracks. Is the reason that an underpass is now proposed because it is cheaper?*

R: An analysis of the bridge over the railroad indicates that it is not feasible, regardless of cost. Such a project would have significant property acquisition impacts.

*C: There is poor drainage in the area. The community is concerned about more flooding due to the terminal's development.*

R: The terminal now has virtually no drainage system except runoff onto the local streets. This, in turn, causes silt from the terminal to clog drains and cause flooding. The Livernois-Junction terminal of the future, if the DIFT were approved, will have a drainage system that will prevent these problems and the Livernois-Junction Yard will be paved.

*C: The Ambassador Bridge traffic situation is "ridiculous." Nothing has happened for years. Then, when we look at your pictures of improved situations at the Livernois-Junction Yard, we are critical.*

*Q: Why aren't the railroads spending their own money as compared to my tax dollars?*

R: The railroads will only make certain improvements at the Livernois-Junction Yard without government assistance. Government assistance is being sought to make changes like paving the yard, improving the drainage, and the like.

*C: The speaker indicated that she is a resident of southwest Detroit. She takes issue with the statement made earlier that Alternative 2: Improve/Expand Existing Terminals, is the CBRA proposal. The fact that there is potential expansion at the Livernois-Junction Yard and at MC Depot is inconsistent with the CBRA alternative which indicates no property acquisition should be associated with intermodal activity.*

*On the air quality issue, no “federal law” prohibits a health assessment. It is a policy that has been adopted by the Federal Highway Administration. Nevertheless, the speaker indicated she spoke with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and health risk assessments are being done by them and other agencies.*

*The speaker indicated that, on a tour of the terminals in Chicago, it was stated by Chicago neighborhood representatives that the jobs that were expected to develop did not and that the nearby intermodal terminal’s development created a number of nuisances, including rat infestation.*

*Q: What is the number of acres for terminal expansion associated with Alternative 4: The Composite Option?*

R: The expansion area is in the range of 200-220 acres.

*Q: Who would own the property that would be acquired?*

R: MDOT would own the property and the railroads would lease it.

*Q: Is there a buffer at the west end of the terminal under Alternative 4?*

R: The plan now shows a buffer only on the north side of the terminal.

*Q: Will the DEIS be available to the public in July 2004?*

R: The preliminary DEIS will be submitted by the consultant to MDOT in July 2004. Following MDOT review, it is expected that the DEIS would be available for public review in October 2004 with a public hearing held at the end of October/beginning of November.

*C: 30 days for a comment period on the DEIS is inadequate. More time should be provided.*

R: The comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will likely extend for 30 days before the public hearing and to 45 days after, for a total of 10 weeks.

*Q: Has the concept been explored that money on a per-lift basis will be directed to the local communities in which terminals exist?*

R: The DIFT project has not explored a per-lift contribution to local communities. It has examined the potential allocation of a portion of the tax money that is generated by the intermodal improvements to the areas that host an expanded intermodal terminal.

*Q: It is hard to visualize how the terminal will look. Could more renderings be provided?*

R: In the past, video simulations have been provided along with renderings of the terminal. This will likely be the case, as recommendations are prepared.

*Q: Will the project consider extending the buffer to the west and south sides of the terminal?*

R: Continuation of the buffer will be explored.

*C: The speaker encourages further examination of Alternative 4 but indicates that it is still too large.*

*Q: How are the forecasts for jobs determined?*

R: The Regional Economic Model (REMI) was applied. It is a model used by Michigan DOT and the University of Michigan for various forecasting purposes. The model indicates that if intermodal consolidation were to occur (Alternative 3), the number of jobs generated in Wayne/southern Oakland County would total almost 3,000 permanent positions by the year 2025.

*C: The community needs to start “bargaining” with MDOT. Legislation is needed to have a person assigned to monitor the DIFT process.*

*The railroads are not cleaning up the area. Another entity from the community is needed to oversee what is going on.*

*The material and explanations presented this evening are over the people’s heads. Someone is needed who can make an understandable presentation to the community.*

*The picture of Central is “pretty.” What will be the process to keep it that way? Who will clean the graffiti? Who will be responsible for the upkeep?*

*The meeting format is all wrong. The presentation and questions/comments section should be first, not last.*

*The speaker demands a health effects study. She urges those in the audience to talk to their legislators.*

*The information presented tonight is overwhelming.*

*C: Livernois, between I-75 and Vernor, is not a very large street and parking is provided on both sides. Trucks using that street are a problem.*

R: It is the intention of the DIFT Project to deter through design the use of Livernois and its counterpart, Dragoon, by trucks entering/leaving the intermodal terminal.



*Q: Did the traffic analysis take into account that Livernois Avenue under the railroad bridge is often flooded?*

R: No. Furthermore, the flooding is often due to the runoff of dirt from the yard which clogs drains. The latter problem will be corrected by paving the yard and improving the drainage.

With that, the formal question/comment session ended at 8:30 p.m. Bob Parsons thanked everyone for attending and indicated the MDOT DIFT Project Team would remain for additional, informal conversation.

*L:\Projects\2846-A\WP\notes\Public\April 1.doc*

**DETROIT INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL PROJECT**  
**Public Meeting**  
**April 1, 2004**  
**Southwest Detroit/East Dearborn Area – Livernois-Junction Yard**  
**LA-SED Gymnasium**  
**715 West Vernor**

**Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Zip</b>
-------------	----------------	-------------	------------